**Legal & Medical Latin**

Two of the areas in which we still use quite a lot of Latin are the legal and medical professions. So, here are some legal and medical terms which are still used today…



**Section ‘A’ – OPTIONAL**

1. In advance, the teacher has cut up the legal terms from the table below. Students in groups match up the elements from the 3 columns. Students stick down their terms on a large piece of paper for their record.
2. Students in groups act out the mini drama below which gives context to the phrases.
3. Students make up their own situation/drama using as many of the phrases as possible.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Latin term used in English** | **Latin words it comes from** | **Meaning of the phrase/word in English** |
| Post mortem | Post=after  Mortem=death | The medical examination to determine the cause of death after they died. |
| Modus operandi | Modus= way  Operandi= of working | The method by which something is done. |
| Compos mentis | Compos=sane  Mentis= in the mind | When someone is sane and not crazy. |
| Ergo | Ergo= therefore | Therefore, and so |
| p.m. | Post= after  Meridiem= 12 noon | In the afternoon |
| Ipso facto | Ipso= itself  Facto= by the deed | This shows that….. |
| Viz. (abbreviation) | Videlicet=namely, that is to say | Namely, that is to say |
| Cranium | Cranium=skull | Medical term for the skull |
| Cardiac | Cardis= heart | To do with the heart |
| Capillaries | Capilli=little hairs | The very thin veins going through your body. |
| Subcutaneous | Sub=under  Cutis=the skin | The medical term for what is under your skin |
| Pro rata | Pro= for  Rata= the going rate | You get paid for as many hours as you work |
| N.B. | Nota= note  Bene= well | Take notice of this |
| Q. E. D. | Quod= which, this thing  Erat= was  Demonstrandum= demonstrated | This has been proved in this way. |
| In perpertuo | In= in  Perpetuo= perpetuity, i.e. forever | Forever |

**Section ‘B’**

**Judge**: Order in the court! Order in the court! On the 29th July 2013, Mrs Joanna Bloggs was attacked in the woods outside her house. Tragically, she later died, and the **post mortem** has revealed further information. We have to decide the **modus operandi** of the attacker, if Mr Bill Bass was the culprit or not, and whether he is quite **compos mentis**. **Ergo,** we have this trial. Order, order! Our first witness is a doctor, who can give further details about Mrs Joanna Bloggs’ condition.

**Doctor:** I was called to the scene of the attack in Cramond Woods soon after 9.30**pm** last night, and examined the casualty. She had obviously sustained a violent blow to her **cranium**, and as a result of this trauma, she suffered a **cardiac** arrest. Her **capillaries** were blocked, and, **ergo,** blood was not circulating round the body. She entered a coma soon after she entered hospital, and, unfortunately, she died there. I conducted a **post mortem**, which revealed that in addition to the blow to the head, Mrs Joanna Bloggs had also suffered a blow to the leg, affecting the **subcutaneous** fat.

**Judge**: Thank you very much, doctor. I now call upon a witness who accuses Mr Bill Bass of the murder.

**Witness**: That man sitting there is a lying pestilence, Your Honour! I was walking my dog in the woods on the evening of 29th July. Then, I heard a scream in the woods ahead of me. I saw this very man running towards me, with a hammer in his hand, and a wild look in his eyes.

**Lawyer**: My Lord, I am here to represent Mr Bill Bass, who is the defendant in this trial. Your witness claims to have built up quite a strong case against my client. However, it is my job to prove to you that at the time when Mrs Joanna Bloggs was attacked, Mr Bill Bass was in fact visiting his sick grandmother and, **ipso facto**, he could not have done this brutal crime! **Q.E.D** – I have without a doubt shown him to be innocent! Unfortunately, his sick grandmother expired on the night of the 3rd August 2013, **ergo**, sheis not able to tell us any more about his visit.

**Psychologist:** I also would like to vouch for Mr Bill Bass, and, in my professional opinion, he is completely sane and **compos mentis**. **N.B.** I’m here **pro rata,** Your Honour, and if this one goes on as long as the last case…

**Judge**: Quite, quite. That’s enough, all very interesting, thank you. I now call upon Josephine Briggs, **viz**. the victim’s mother.

**Josephine Briggs**: I am just heartbroken at the loss of Joanna. I can’t imagine why anyone would try to attack her! But then again, Bill always did seem to be a strange man and I can imagine him doing this, the horrible old man. And now she’s dead and her body’s in a mortuary! (exits sobbing…) **[mors, mortis – Noun//mortuus, -a, -um – Adj.]**

**Judge**: Oh dear. And now the man you’ve all been waiting for, Mr Bill Bass….

**Bill Bass**: (Overcome with emotion) My Lord Judge, I’m sorry! I change my plea, I plead guilty, not innocent! I killed Joanna Bloggs and stole her golden necklace and her iPhone X! I don’t know what came over me … despite the psychologist’s report, I don’t think I was quite **compos mentis**. Sentence me as you wish, My Lord. I can never forgive myself for what I have done!

**Judge:** Neither can I! (reaches for his black cap) You will now be put in prison, incarcerated [**carcer – Noun**] **in perpetuo** --- until really you go out of your mind.

**Bill Bass:** **parce mihi, parce mihi!**

**Judge:** Ah, you speak Latin! I’m not normally allowed to do this, but, just this once, I’ll have to let you off.